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## Second Committee

**Summary record of the 17th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 20 October 2011, at 3 p.m.

*Chair*: Mr. Momen ..... (Bangladesh)
*later*: Mr. Zdorov (Vice-Chair) ..... (Belarus)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.*

**Address by the President of the General Assembly**

1. **Mr. Al-Nasser** (President of the General Assembly) said that the economic and financial crisis continued to hamper the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As the forum for international decision-making, the General Assembly had a responsibility to confront those challenges. He was confident that the Committee's deliberations would lay the bases for that task.

2. He had identified sustainable development and global prosperity as one of the four key areas to be addressed by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session. The most vulnerable countries would receive particular attention. The Committee was encouraged to find creative and innovative ways for the timely implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action concluded at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs); the Almaty Programme of Action addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries; and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. All development partners should fulfil their commitments, and South-South and triangular cooperation should be promoted. The Committee's two informal joint meetings with the Economic and Social Council would help to ensure coordination within the Organization.

**Agenda item 22: Groups of countries in special situations**

**(a) Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries** (A/66/134 and A/66/66-E/2011/78)

**(b) Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation** (A/66/205)

3. **Mr. Diarra** (Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the ten-year appraisal and review of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (A/66/66-E/2011/78) and the report of the Secretary-General on the outcome of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (A/66/134), said that the latter set forth the eight priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action, namely productive capacity; agriculture, food security and rural development; trade; commodities; human and social development; multiple crises and other emerging challenges; mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building; and good governance at all levels.

4. Immediately after the Conference, his Office, which had a mandate to mobilize and coordinate all parts of the United Nations system, had begun work on an implementation strategy and had organized a brainstorming meeting for United Nations agencies, Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and some Member States. On the basis of that meeting, it had developed a comprehensive inter-agency road map that sought to mobilize active and constructive engagement of all the development partners of LDCs, illustrating their specific roles in a focused and time-bound manner.

5. An inter-governmental mechanism would follow up and monitor the Programme of Action at the national, regional and global levels, with priority assigned to mainstreaming of the Programme of Action in the national development strategies of LDCs and the cooperation strategies of development partners. At the regional level, the United Nations regional commissions and agencies would conduct biennial reviews of the implementation of the Programme of Action in cooperation with subregional and regional development banks and intergovernmental organizations. At the global level, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council would monitor implementation on an annual basis.

6. The United Nations funds and programmes and other multilateral organizations would integrate the Programme of Action into their own work programmes; several had already decided to do so. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) would organize relevant events in October and

November 2011. In addition to ensuring coordination and coherence, the Office was developing a joint project with the International Parliamentary Union and a platform for continued private sector engagement. The Private Sector Steering Committee had agreed to form a business advisory council for LDCs.

7. LDC issues should be prioritized at major international conferences and summits on economic, social and related topics, such as the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Busan from 29 November to 1 December 2011, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 and the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (the Durban Climate Change Conference). His Office was organizing a side-event on LDCs at the High-level Forum.

8. **Mr. Mero** (United Republic of Tanzania) welcomed the practical way to proceed outlined by the Under-Secretary-General. His own Government was preparing short and medium-term programmes to follow up the Conference on the Least Developed Countries, and looked forward to the support of the United Nations and all development partners.

9. **Mr. Suárez Salvia** (Argentina) said that his delegation recognized the significant and effective role of the Office, but had some concerns regarding its participation in the High-level Forum in Busan. The reform of the international architecture of development assistance was relevant to all Member States and ought to be discussed primarily at the United Nations. The process initiated pursuant to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness existed in parallel with the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), which contained a decision to strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council by holding a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum. It was not clear that a United Nations agency should participate in such parallel processes without a clear intergovernmental mandate.

10. **Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh) said that a joint meeting of the executive boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme (WFP) would take place in January 2012. Among other topic it would discuss ways in which those agencies could promote the Istanbul Programme of Action. It would be useful for the Office to be directly involved in the discussions.

11. He asked whether the road map referred to by the Under-Secretary-General had been finalized, and whether it would be formally transmitted to Member States.

12. **Mr. Diarra** (Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States) said that the short and medium-term programmes announced by the United Republic of Tanzania were exactly of the sort that his Office encouraged. His recent visits to Bhutan and Nepal had brought to his attention other such strategies.

13. While understanding the concerns expressed by the representative of Argentina, he believed that LDC issues should be showcased at events related to aid effectiveness. Development partners were increasingly asking about the impact of their initiatives on the ground. Learning how to address the concerns of taxpayers in developed countries should be understood as a way to share best practices. The event in question was being organized jointly with the Chair of the Group of LDCs.

14. He would welcome the opportunity to attend the meeting of executive boards in January 2012. The road map was intended to provide guidance to other United Nations entities. It partly addressed the actions that should by taken by Governments, in particular mainstreaming the Istanbul Programme of Action into their domestic strategies and engaging with all stakeholders, including members of parliament, the private sector and civil society.

15. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries (A/66/205), he said that it took stock of progress made and constraints faced in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, in particular in its five priority areas of

fundamental transit policy issues; infrastructure development and maintenance; international trade and trade facilitation; international support measures; and implementation and review. In particular, the report recommended that landlocked developing countries, supported by their development partners, should strategically improve their productive capacities, diversify their economies and strengthen their transport systems to become more efficient. International organizations and other research institutions should conduct research on the vulnerability of landlocked developing countries to external shocks and develop a set of vulnerability indicators for early warning purposes.

16. His Office had continued to strengthen its efforts to assist landlocked developing countries by mobilizing international support. In cooperation with the Office of Legal Affairs, it had drafted a multilateral agreement on the establishment of a think tank for landlocked developing countries. The agreement had been signed by Ethiopia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Niger and Paraguay. A minimum of ten signatures was required in order for the think tank to become operational.

17. The end of the first decade of the Almaty Programme was now approaching. The Secretary-General's report recommended that in accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/2, the Assembly should consider undertaking the final review of its implementation. The Conference should be preceded by substantive preparations at the subregional and regional levels.

18. **Ms. Ochir** (Mongolia) said that her delegation particularly appreciated the initiative to establish an international think tank for landlocked developing countries. She asked how the preparatory process for the 2013 review of the Almaty Programme of Action could be made more meaningful and effective, and how the Office could contribute to developing a set of vulnerability indicators.

19. **Mr. Madani** (Afghanistan) announced that his country had signed the multilateral agreement on the establishment of the think tank on 19 October 2011.

20. **Mr. Diarra** (Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States) said that preparations for the 2013 review would begin after the adoption of a General Assembly resolution at the current session. They would begin at the subregional level and would focus on the five priority areas. The regional commissions would then be consulted in order to bring in different global perspectives. Member States may wish to plan for some thematic preparatory conferences. Two preparatory meetings had already been planned, one regarding intergovernmental processes and one regarding new challenges confronting landlocked developing countries. A United Nations inter-agency consultative group would meet in Geneva in early December 2011 in order to discuss those issues.

21. With regard to vulnerability indicators, the Office would consult with the various United Nations agencies, each of which had its own area of expertise.

22. He welcomed the signing of the multilateral agreement by Afghanistan and hoped that other countries would follow suit in order to make the think tank a reality.

23. **The Chair** invited the Committee to engage in a general discussion on the item.

24. **Mr. Suárez Salvia** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that LDCs, which had doubled since 1971, continued to confront structural impediments to their development efforts and had remained highly vulnerable to external shocks. There was widespread concern that their predicament had worsened as a result of the ongoing global economic crisis and that the modest development gains attained in recent years had begun to unravel. The situation had become critical and could no longer be tolerated. All stakeholders must implement the Istanbul Programme of Action, the success of which would depend on encouraging a leadership role for LDCs in formulating and implementing relevant policy decisions in accordance with the specific conditions and requirements of each. Guided by the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, developing countries could contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action by actively engaging in South-South cooperation.

25. The burden of external debt likewise had to be addressed, in particular through the cancellation of multilateral and bilateral debts owed by LDCs. Duty-free and quota-free market access had not substantially increased those countries' export market share in world trade, which had remained marginal at less than 1 per

cent. There must be greater focus on raising productive capacities and on economic and export diversification.

26. In the landlocked developing countries, progress in reducing poverty, hunger, maternal mortality, inadequate sanitation and gender inequality in education had not kept pace with economic growth. The ongoing global economic crisis would slow it even more, and the number of people living in extreme poverty would remain unacceptably high. The international community must therefore provide additional financial and technical support to assist those countries in overcoming their geographical constraints by investing in their transportation, energy, information and communications infrastructures, as well as by promoting trade facilitation projects. Trade was a vital means of achieving international economic integration, and the failure of the Doha Round to address development challenges in the context of international trade had been of particular concern.

27. Despite the creation of more attractive investment climates through reforms and policy improvements to reduce bureaucracy, lower costs, improve business procedures and enhance public services, landlocked developing countries remained at a competitive disadvantage in attracting private investments. Additional policy measures had to be introduced to facilitate the flow of public and private investments in pursuit of the full implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

28. **Mr. Acharya** (Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that enhancing productive capacities in the least developed countries was critical to the realization of the goals and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action. Doing so would require the development, acquisition, transfer and dissemination of technologies, in particular environmentally sound technologies. To that end, the mandate of the Istanbul Programme of Action to undertake a joint analysis with the aim of establishing a Technology Bank and a Science, Technology and Innovation supporting mechanism should be implemented ahead of schedule.

29. LDCs must be made more able to withstand internal and external shocks, including the disproportionate impacts of climate change, and it was vital that their access to financing for green technologies should be facilitated through the timely inauguration of the Green Climate Fund. Moreover, those of them which were emerging from conflicts needed additional international support to promote good governance, consolidate national ownership and institutional capacities and assist in post-conflict economic and social recovery.

30. Effective relief measures had to be undertaken to cancel the bilateral and multilateral debt of LDCs, with immediate substantial reductions as an interim measure. Likewise, greater export market access for the least developed countries and simplified and transparent trade rules had to be introduced. With little sign of an early conclusion to the Doha Round, the implementation of the "early harvest provisions" incorporating the issues relevant to the least developed countries would be instrumental in accelerating their development agendas. Development partners should significantly increase their share of assistance through Aid for Trade as agreed to in the Istanbul Programme of Action.

31. The provisions of that Programme of Action should be made central to the development policies and programmes of LDCs, and should be mainstreamed into the respective policy frameworks and operational activities of United Nations agencies and relevant stakeholders. Its success would be measured by its contribution to bringing about qualitative changes in the lives of nearly 1 billion poor people living in the least developed countries.

32. **Mr. Dos Santos** (Paraguay), speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that they continued to face serious challenges in accessing international trade. Their production and exports were limited, and they depended on a small number of primary products that were vulnerable to price fluctuations. They often could not afford to maintain efficient transit transport networks. Official development assistance (ODA) flows therefore continued to be essential.

33. The 2013 review of the Almaty Programme of Action was of critical importance to landlocked developing countries, and should aim to develop a common approach for strategic action over the following decade, based on closer partnership between them and transit countries and drawing on the effective support of development partners. The Aid for Trade Initiative could play a vital role in liberalization by allowing recipient States to benefit effectively from trade, develop the necessary infrastructure and

implement adjustment measures. Aid for Trade should be a complement to, not a substitute for, ODA. The reduction or elimination of trade barriers would also benefit landlocked developing countries.

34. The establishment of an international think tank for landlocked developing countries would provide valuable analysis. He was grateful to those States that had signed the multilateral agreement on the subject, and called on the remaining landlocked developing States to do so by the deadline of 31 October 2011.

35. The Group supported the recommendation that international entities should conduct research on the vulnerability of landlocked developing countries to external shocks through the development of a set of vulnerability indicators.

36. Developed States should take action to mitigate and adapt to climate change, which had accentuated deforestation, desertification and loss of biodiversity, and had a negative impact on transport infrastructure. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities should be urgently applied, and stable and predictable funding should be in place for technology and capacity-building on the ground.

37. *Mr. Zdorov (Vice-Chair) took the Chair.*

38. **Mr. Cazeau** (Haiti), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that halving the number of LDCs by 2020 by increasing their productive capacities and attaining sustainable, equitable annual growth rates of at least 7 per cent would require them to assume the primary responsibility for their own development. To that end, their Governments had to take a more active role in the development process and identify the correct balance between public and private initiatives.

39. The international community also had to address the unique fragilities of those countries, which were vulnerable as the result of their lack of economic diversification and the daunting transport and transit costs they faced. Greater international assistance would underwrite projects in key sectors such as transportation infrastructure, energy, information and communications technologies and trade facilitation with other landlocked and transit countries. Developed countries had to open their markets to goods from landlocked developing countries and to encourage the flow of foreign direct investments into them.

40. **Mr. Khan** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that given the volatility of the prevailing global economic situation LDCs and the landlocked developing countries would face formidable challenges in implementing their national development agendas and achieving the MDGs. ASEAN supported the goals and objectives of the Istanbul Programme of Action, in particular its focus on national productive capacities and agriculture. The Programme of Action must be integrated into national development strategies and the cooperation frameworks of international development partners. In implementing support measures, coherence among different policy areas, including official development assistance (ODA), trade, foreign direct investment, debt and finance, was essential, but the geographical and socio-economic characteristics and vulnerabilities of each individual country also had to be taken into consideration.

41. Despite the progress made in implementing the Almaty Programme of Action, greater attention had to be paid to amending regulatory regimes associated with transit transportation and cross-border trade. Landlocked developing countries continued to be marginalized in international trade by their inherent geographical disadvantages, and could not fully harness the potential of trade as an engine of sustained economic growth in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals.

42. ASEAN was committed to greater integration among its Member States and had implemented various relevant initiatives, including the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI). It appreciated the work done in that regard by the United Nations system, and looked forward to the next session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in 2012 on enhancing regional economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region.

43. South-South and triangular cooperation, which had become increasingly important to the process of economic integration and to the development of countries in the South within bilateral, subregional and regional frameworks, had to complement rather than substitute for North-South cooperation.

44. **Mr. Zampetti** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Croatia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization

and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union fully supported the Istanbul Programme of Action and was determined to achieve the ambitious objectives set in it, particularly that of graduating half of the least developed countries by 2020, by taking them fully into account in bilateral and regional programmes with LDCs.

45. The MDG initiative worth 1 billion euros launched by the European Union at the Millennium Development Goals Summit in 2010 was now being implemented. By prioritizing the MDGs which were most off-track, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and in the least developed countries, a genuine difference could be made. The European Commission had made proposals on how to increase the impact of European Union development policy, and trusted that they would reinforce cooperation with the least developed countries.

46. **Ms. Vitie** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that they had long been committed development partners for LDCs and had provided significant amounts of official development assistance and support for duty-free and quota-free export market access. They were committed to supporting LDCs in pursuing the objectives set in the Istanbul Programme of Action and, in partnership with all concerned parties, would continue through their bilateral programmes to support those countries as they sought to graduate from least-developed status.

47. **Ms. Sirotkina** (Russian Federation) said that her delegation welcomed the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action. The enormous human and natural resource potential of the least developed countries could contribute significantly to global economic growth. Enhancing their productive potential, first and foremost through structural reforms aimed at diversification merited the highest priority. Her country was in the process of developing its potential as an aid donor. It was committed to the principle of international development cooperation, and had taken practical steps towards that end: ODA in 2010, not including debt forgiveness, had totalled $472.32 million, and would reach approximately $500 million in 2011.

48. Her Government had also taken measures to bolster global food security. In 2010 it had adopted a programme of international cooperation in the agricultural and fisheries sectors, in conjunction with a range of international organizations including the United Nations and its Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to which it had contributed $330 million from 2009 to 2011.

49. Two of the most important development factors for the least developed countries were increases in productive potential and the creation of favourable conditions for access to export markets, in support of which her Government had adopted a preferential tariff regime for goods that encouraged the growth of traditional national industries and the agricultural sector.

50. Landlocked developing countries likewise represented a top priority. Her country's unique geographical situation permitted it to play a central role in the development of the Eurasian transport infrastructure with the aim of establishing an effective system of transit transport based on the potential of regional economic commissions, such as the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

51. **Mr. Al Amri** (Yemen) said that LDCs faced a number of constraints that jeopardized the realization of the MDGs. The eighth MDG, namely development of a global partnership for development, had not yet been achieved. LDCs needed particular assistance, including ODA, technology transfer and capacity-building. Support for their economies had decreased in certain cases, and in any case appeared to have had little tangible impact on poverty and unemployment. LDCs were genuinely concerned for the future of ODA flows, which might have negative consequences for their intensive development efforts. Developed States should promote the Istanbul Programme of Action and ensure comprehensive and practical compliance. They should provide LDCs with financial and technical support, assisting in the implementation of national strategies. South-South and triangular cooperation should be strengthened as a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation. The international community should take action to alleviate the debt burden on LDCs.

52. **Mr. Tiong** (Malaysia) said that the uncertain global financial and economic outlook had made it imperative that the international community should successfully implement the Istanbul Programme of Action and that LDCs should take ownership of development policy choices in accordance with their individual conditions and requirements.

53. His country remained committed to the common endeavour of raising the socio-economic status of the least developed countries. More than 20,000 participants from 138 countries had benefited from the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), initiated in 1980, which had provided experts with relevant expertise to the least developed countries.

54. Strengthening South-South cooperation by involving countries of the North under the triangular cooperation model was important, and his country had been implementing that arrangement with both bilateral and multilateral agencies. Technical aid for LDCs should be disbursed along the lines of the Paris Declaration and of aid effectiveness principles such as coherence, sustainability and alignment.

55. **Ms. Thakur** (India) said that the Istanbul Programme of Action spelled out a clear road map to help LDCs lift themselves out of hunger, poverty and disease. Mobilization of adequate resources for development in those countries was vital, and developed countries must fulfil their commitment to provide 0.15-0.20 per cent of their gross national income as ODA to LDCs. Technology transfers, capacity-building and strengthening economic support measures were equally crucial to bolstering their resource base.

56. In order to increase the participation of LDCs in the global trading network, the full implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access had to be guaranteed. Greater trade policy space also had to be created for them through a balanced and development-oriented outcome to the Doha Round.

57. The global financial and economic crisis had worsened the debt burdens of LDCs, and international financial institutions and developed countries had to provide them with immediate debt relief in order to stimulate economic growth and investment. Climate change also posed a severe challenge to their development. Her Government, as part of its commitment to South-South cooperation, had gone beyond technical assistance to include trade, investment and humanitarian aid, and had extended a duty-free tariff preference scheme to all LDCs, with lines of credit worth $4.8 billion extended since 2003. At the same time, Aid for Trade programmes had led to the expansion of India's trade with LDCs from $16.7 billion in 2008-2009 to $20.5 billion in 2009-2010, with the balance of trade in their favour. Additional lines of credit worth $1 billion had been extended in support of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

58. Of equal concern was the plight of landlocked developing countries, which had been hard-hit by the global economic downturn; efficient transportation and communication services, including reliable logistics chains, must be developed to offset their transit and access difficulties and costs. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, they spent twice as much on transport and insurance services for their exports as other developing countries, and three times more than developed economies. Her Government had special bilateral cooperation agreements with its landlocked neighbours for easy transit of their goods through its territory. It accorded the highest priority to strengthening those ties through additional regional initiatives, and recognized the need to meet special transit requirements of landlocked regions within countries.

59. **Ms. Ochir** (Mongolia) said that in light of the upcoming 10-year review in 2013 her delegation wished to address the preparatory process in the lead-up to that review. A number of policy measures and initiatives had undertaken to implement the Almaty Programme of Action at the international, national, regional and subregional levels. Progress had been achieved in all five priority areas, including reducing border delays, expanding transport infrastructure development, increasing efforts to harmonize norms and standards in the transport sector, allocating more ODA to transport, storage and communications and increasing foreign direct investment and debt relief. Nevertheless, the landlocked developing countries needed increased Aid for Trade assistance and infrastructure investment, a reduction of transport costs and strengthened productive capacities were crucial to raising the competitiveness of landlocked developed countries. In that respect they would benefit from the expertise of the relevant institutions of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), in developing a model transit transport agreement.

60. In the globalized information economy, translating knowledge into policy and practice was critical to the least developed countries, and the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries would conduct in-depth research in priority areas. The institution would become operational following the receipt by the Secretary-General of 10 ratifications of

the relevant Multilateral Agreement by Member States and her Government therefore urged others to join t agreement.

61. Subregional and regional cooperation played an important role in advancing the objectives of the Almaty Programme of Action. The High-Level Asia-Pacific Policy Dialogue on the implementation of the Programme of Action, organized by her Government and ESCAP in Ulaanbaatar in April 2011, had adopted the Ulaanbaatar Declaration identifying critical areas for fuller implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action at the regional level.

62. Her Government's priorities included a number of substantive measures along the lines of the Almaty Programme of Action, including programmes designed to foster trade and facilitate transport, while the Programme of Action for 2008-2012 had provided for improving its transport infrastructure to meet the growing demand for mineral exports. The period of 2011-2013 would be the peak years for construction of new railway lines and roads, which would open new access to seaports in China and the Russian Federation. Concessional tariff regimes for transit transport of export products were also being negotiated.

63. **Mr. Farias** (Brazil) said that the ultimate goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action was to facilitate the graduation of at least half of the world's least developed countries by 2020. The progress made in that respect in recent years had been jeopardized by the ongoing global economic crisis, which posed a real threat that aid flows would be reduced and made even more conditional. Donor countries must uphold their commitments and act as a matter of priority to improve on local ownership, transparency and accountability.

64. By giving prominence to South-South cooperation the Istanbul Programme of Action had recognized the important contributions of other developing countries to LDCs. With respect to landlocked developing countries, his Government had been working with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to support the two landlocked countries in the region, Bolivia and Paraguay, for which Brazil served was an important transit country. It had also implemented the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA), which had contributed to the objectives of the Almaty Programme of Action.

65. **Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh) said that as a result of repeated financial crises, volatility in international markets, unprecedented food and energy price rises and the devastating impacts of climate change, some 1 billion people had been pushed over the poverty line and 30 million people had lost their jobs.

66. The collapse of the Doha Round had been a major setback for the multilateral trading system, and LDCs, already marginalized in North-South trade, had become increasingly marginalized in South-South trade as well. The world community must fulfil the pledges it had made to those countries; in particular, development partners should be urged to honour the pledges they had made at the Monterrey Conference of 2002.

67. The Istanbul Programme of Action had rightly identified obstacles and constraints to the continued progress of the least developed countries, and had provided a framework for effective partnerships to facilitate their integration into the world economy.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*